

The December meeting for AYHSC was held on December 3rd, 2015 from 5:30-7:00pm at the Whittemore Robbins House.

In Attendance:

Adults: Ivy Laplante, Mike Leach, Pat Egan, Cindy Bouvier, Paul Franzosa, Carlene Newell, Jared Blake, Kathy Hirsch

Students: Cooper Schoenthaler, Nora Maybury, Olivia Sorenson, Julie Powers, Catie Blair, Sana Mohtadi

I. Welcome

Introductions - Student Advisors and community members all introduced themselves and their respective roles in our community.

II. Old Business

Marijuana Parent Forum on 11/16: Coalition members who attended to forum in November were asked to share their impressions. Audience members enjoyed participating in the lively discussion with Dr. Scott Hadland's research on marijuana and the teenage brain. Many were surprised at the overall lack of research on medical marijuana and this makes wide-scale usage a problem.

Increased police patrols at Llamas farm near Lexington: Ivy spoke to Captain Flynn of APD who increased patrols by Llamas and also spread the message to Lexington PD who also increased patrols to that area. At this time there is an overall decrease in youth activity due to cold weather.

Students smoking behind CVS: The temporary Christmas Tree farm prevents students from gathering in the parking lot behind CVS to smoke marijuana because the pathway connecting AHS to CVS is now blocked by a large amount of brush. Coalition agreed that a more permanent pathway block is needed for when the brush is eventually removed.

A. Student Coalition Updates

Project Purple Game at AHS: The Coalition Student Advisor Club is now meeting weekly at AHS to discuss different prevention initiatives. They have begun planning for the Project Purple Basketball Game which will take place in January to raise awareness for substance abuse prevention and mental health promotion via The Herren Project.

B. Current Project Updates

BSAS Grant: Coalition members are needed to interview key stakeholders in the community. Ivy asked all Coalition members to interview at least 1 general community member, youth or parent and to hand in interview sheets by next Coalition meeting on January 14.

YRBS at Arlington High School: The 2016 YRBS at AHS will take place on January 27th from 10-11:30am. There will be a focus on addressing access to drugs, and community norms. Coalition members are asked to volunteer during survey to facilitate survey administration.

Five minutes to think of five successes: Coalition took five minutes to identify 5 successes from the month of November: CVS brush path prevents students from smoking, marijuana parent forum, student advisor weekly meetings, conversations around Thanksgiving table about Coalition work, YRBS date and plan established at AHS.

III. New Business

A. Comprehensive Strategies Intervention: Topic: Youth underage drinking around the holidays. Students said that the older kids in college provide alcohol for the younger youth still in high school during holiday parties. Coalition identified a need to identify and promote alternatives to youth drinking around New Year's Eve. Paul Franzosa offered to contact the Regent Theater and ask for discounted youth tickets for NYE rock concert.

Student advisors suggested creating new penalties for underage drinking to disincentivize behavior. Current MIAA violation penalties (miss 25% of next sport season) is a disincentive. Other ideas discussed were revoking leadership roles of those in extracurricular activities, losing captain status in sports team, a social media policy, and a class absence or grade-loss penalty for underage drinking. It was noted that private schools have more leverage with social media and grade-loss policies than do public schools.

One student advisor gave an anecdotal story of how the #1 deterrent to risky behavior was their mother's disapproval. Research supports this and reports parents who set strict guidelines for their child's behavior and do not allow underage drinking contribute to their children making healthy decisions and avoiding alcohol and other drugs. Possible campaign to inform parents that disapproval is a very effective deterrent for their youth to stop drinking could take place in the Spring.

B. Community Update- "What's Happening in Arlington?"

Meeting Adjournment 7:00 pm

Next Coalition Meeting - January 14, 2016 at 5:30pm - Whittemore Robbins House